

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE TO MEXICO

DR. J. DAN WEBSTER, professor of zoology, Hanover College, will leave this month to collect birds for the third time in the state of Zacatecas, Mexico. Funds for a six-week study of birdlife in the state were supplied by the college.

Specimens collected will be donated to the Academy, as were those he gathered in 1950 and 1952. Dr. Webster is a research associate in the Department of Birds and Mammals here.

Ornithologically, the state is one of the least explored in Mexico. During the summer of 1950, Dr. Webster secured eight species of birds not previously reported there and on his second trip 28 species and subspecies, one of which was new to science.

ROSS RECEIVES FELLOWSHIP

DR. EDWARD S. ROSS, curator, Department of Entomology, has been awarded a Fellowship by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, for an expedition to the upper waters of the Amazon. Insect hunter Ross, who plans to leave about August 1, intends to "bring them back alive" *on film*.

Ever since Dr. Ross published his unique book of insect studies, *Insects Close Up*, he has been doing more and more insect photography, including a number of assignments for *Life*.

NEW DEPARTMENT CREATED

BY ACTION of the Council at its meeting of May 13, 1954, a Department of Astronomy was created. George W. Bunton, manager of the Morrison Planetarium, was named curator, and Leon E. Salanave associate curator.

ACADEMY LOSES TWO MEMBERS

THE DEATH of two members of the California Academy of Sciences is regrettably announced. Belmore Browne, Alaskan explorer and veteran of three expeditions to Mt. McKinley, died May 2, 1954, in Rye, New York, and R. F. Henley, whose polished gem specimens are on exhibit in the Science Museum, died April 17, 1954, in San Francisco.

NEW MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS were elected by the Council at its meeting of May 13, 1954:

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Perry O. Allen
Mr. Raymond Cannon
Mr. V. B. James
Mr. Ken F. Royce
Mr. David H. Rytand
Mr. Percy D. Tyler

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Ralph C. Shermund

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Katy Pugh

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DR. R. A. STIRTON

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June Announcement

THE REGULAR JUNE MEETING will be held at 8:15 P. M., Wednesday, June 9, in the Morrison Auditorium, California Academy of Sciences. Dr. R. A. Stirton, chairman, Department of Paleontology, University of California, and a Fellow of the Academy, will give an illustrated lecture:

"DIGGING DOWN UNDER"

With the aid of kodachrome slides Dr. Stirton will tell one of the most dramatic stories of paleontological discovery to come out of Australia in half a century. The essentials of the story were covered in *Pacific Discovery* (March-April 1954).

The discoveries were made last year when Dr. Stirton and Richard H. Tedford, U. C. graduate student, went to Australia as Fulbright scholars. Their hope was to throw some light on a great gap (some 125 million years) in the fossil record of down-under mammals. As you will recall from newspaper accounts at the time, they were quite successful. Dr. Stirton now feels, as he puts it, that "the door is slightly ajar" on this gap in scientific knowledge. He hopes to get his foot in the door at least when he goes back this July to begin a three-month exploration.

Dr. Stirton will show photographs taken at Lake Callabonna, a treasure house of *Diprotodon* fossils, which his party rediscovered after it had been "lost" for 60 years. The campsite of two scientists who were there in 1893 was exactly as they had left it, almost perfectly preserved by the arid climate.

Photographs of Stirton's trip to Cooper's Creek and to Lake Palankarinna, where the most significant finds were made, show the lonely wastes of Australia's great Outback. Much of this country now has even fewer human inhabitants than before. Kangaroos, dingos, wild descendants of blooded horses, and even camels roam among old deserted stations.

TO WORK IN ALASKA

POINT BARROW, ALASKA, will be headquarters for Dr. G. Dallas Hanna, curator, Department of Geology, for the next three months. He plans to leave here shortly after June 1 for work with the Arctic Research Laboratory of the Office of Naval Research.

Dr. Hanna will investigate the geology of the ocean floor offshore along the coast of Alaska in the vicinity of Point Barrow. Just how long he will be able

to work will be determined by ice conditions, but he expects to return to the Academy in September.

ATTEND CONFERENCE

FOUR MEMBERS of the Academy staff attended the 49th annual meeting of the American Association of Museums held May 26-28 at Santa Barbara.

Dr. Robert C. Miller, director of the Academy, spoke on "Museum Television from the Museum's Viewpoint," and Matthew C. Carberry, executive assistant to the director, discussed "Expanding the Services of the Science Museum."

"Minerals on Display" was the topic for Cecil Tose, curator, Department of Exhibits, and George W. Bunton, curator, Department of Astronomy, described the Academy projector to representatives of other planetaria.

A LITTLE LEMON JUICE, PLEASE

THERE AREN'T very many fish-eating bats in this part of world, but Dr. Robert T. Orr, curator of birds and mammals, is stuck with four of them.

Brought here from Isla Blanca, near Guaymas, Mexico, they have been taking their ease at the Academy for a month, steadfastly eating nothing but fish, preferably whitebait, and sliced, please. Steinhart Aquarium has been temporarily declared off limits to Dr. Orr.

The bats, *Pisonyx livesi*, were collected by Prentice Bloedel, graduate student, Department of Zoology, University of California. Bloedel was a student of Dr. Donald R. Griffin's, and he worked with him in the Panama Canal Zone studying the new world's only other species of fish-eating bat.

According to Bloedel and Dr. Orr there isn't anyone on Isla Blanca to cut up whitebait for the bats. Having to rough it, they skim the water until they impale a small fish or shrimp on their claws.

ACADEMY CRICKET SCORES

KQED, the Bay Area's new, noncommercial, community television station made its debut last month, although it is not yet officially on the air. Previews have been shown of a number of the programs which are to be broadcast when Channel 9 goes on the air regularly.

Two shows will be presented by members of the Academy staff. Dr. Edward Kessel of the University of San Francisco, who is associate curator of entomology here, will do a regular feature on insect life, while Dr. Robert T. Orr, curator of birds and mammals, is slated to present "This Animal World."

One of the star performers on Kessel's sneak preview was a pet cricket named Christopher, who drew an enthusiastic review from Terrence O'Flaherty, San Francisco *Chronicle* television columnist. O'Flaherty also liked all the other previews he saw, including a performance by the Griller String Quartet. But Christopher got top billing.